

## **European Policy Statement 2014-2020**

of the Lutheran Theological University

The Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University is the heir of the theological training and scientific efforts of Lutheranism in Hungary that has been marked with a deep international commitment. The adaptation of the knowledge of universities abroad and the cooperation with them has been continuous in our tradition since the 16th century. The wide variety of national traditions had been characteristic for Lutheranism in Hungary until the historic moment in the middle of the 20th century as theology was excluded from the circle of academic sciences. It has been a strategic aim of the institution since the political changes of 1990 to reach a complete reintegration into the higher educational system in Hungary and the scientific cooperation networks on international level.

Europe and North America play a distinguished role in the international integration process of the Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University, where scientific research and education stand on a high level. From the perspective of the practice-oriented application in Hungary one can state the same consequences. The international connections of our institution - dominantly integrated into the system of the European Union - may be realized in 3 circles:

1. in inter-church connections – on the base of agreements between partner-churches and their partner-institutions: scholarship, exchange of students and teaching staff, joint scientific programs etc.
2. in the frames of the international church-organisations (World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, Martin Luther Bund, Gustav Adolf Werk etc.): in scholarship programs and in the field of theological research programs, conferences and publications
3. in the frames of the LLL-Erasmus Programme of the European Union: in mobility of students, teaching and administrative staff.

The strategic principles of the active participation of the institution in the LLL-Erasmus Programme:

1. to deepen the bilateral cooperation with the partner-institutions with a special emphasis on the sustainability of the intensity and quality of the cooperation;
2. to reach mutuality in the field of the exchanges with the partner-institutions;
3. to focus on scientific researches and educational programs that can be realised in cooperation with the partner-institutions , that are marked as important in the educational and research strategy of the institution;
4. to establish and deepen cooperation between the institutions and teaching staff members that may be developed to a base for further and broader projects in other programs of the cooperation;
5. to acquire a competitive and effective knowledge in the mobility of students that may increase the acknowledgement of the degree in the institution;
6. students in the 3rd cycle (PhD) are to be integrated into the exchange programs of the students' mobility of LLL-Erasmus Programme.

As an institution with a profile of theological and religious education training (including social sciences and pedagogy), we are naturally engaged both in our research and curricula with non-discrimination objectives and the integration of disadvantaged persons (gender-studies, ethical research on social and economic cohesion, combatting xenophobia and anti-semitism in education and through church activities, etc.).

The global connections of the Institution can be realized in the framework of the worldwide ecumenical and church organisations. The contemporary and relevant themes (interreligious dialogues, global ethical and social challenges) of the global context outside of Europe and North-America can be integrated into our curriculum in the framework of these organisations.

The international relations of the Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University are based on a wide variety of institutional, academic and church connections. The Erasmus Programme will remain an integral part of them with a distinguished importance in our future European activity.

2.

The Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University implemented the mobility of students (studies abroad), teaching staff and administrative staff on the base of the bilateral agreements with our partner-institutions between 2001 and 2013. Built up on the permanent partnership with our strategic partners we develop the cooperation in bi- and multilateral joint courses and exchanges with an intensive profile in study projects – principally in cooperation with our partners in Germany, Finland and Eastern-Central Europe (Prague and Bratislava). In these projects we plan to involve the Programme as intensively as possible with its whole framework and fundamental principles.

3.

The Evangelical-Lutheran Theological University is deeply engaged in the modernisation of the system of the higher education in Hungary and Europe – especially in the field of its academic and educational profile: theological education, pedagogy and social sciences. We are convinced that theology may be an integral part of higher educational system in our context if it is contributed on a high standard and in a relevant form.

Our institution as the representative of a multicultural Lutheran historic tradition and a traditionally deep social engagement has a lot to offer from the fundamental values of Europe. As Lutherans with a Protestant heritage we stand in a continuous process with ethical values of modern European prosperity, with a special social responsibility, with a strong experience in education, with a historic commitment to tolerance and acceptance based on biblical and excellent human traditions.

The outcome of our contribution in research and curriculum (for instance social justice and ethical questions, ethics of labour, protection of the environment and sustainable economic and social systems, reconciliation between different segments of the society, in the educational and social integration of discriminated persons and communities, ethics of public media etc.) offer communal benefits, especially for the integration of human resources in different contexts.

Theological sciences are characterized by local contextuality and internationality at the same time binding local, regional, European and global levels together. As a result of European integration our minority Lutheran church has reached a multiplied possibility to intensify the internationalisation that will strengthen not only religious, but also cultural and human plurality and tolerance of the region.